

MINUTES

OF THE

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BAPTIST CONVENTION

MET AT

MOUNT PLEASANT,

MAY 31, and JUNE 1, 1791.

NEW-YORK:

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THE BRITISH MUSEUM

OF THE

ANTIQUITIES



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MINUTES

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BAPTIST CONVENTION, &c.

July 31st. **A** GREEABLY to letter received from a conference held at Mount Pleasant, proposing a Convention for the purpose of constituting an association, a number of churches, by their representatives, attended.

1 An introductory discourse was delivered by brother Thomas Montanye, from 2. Tim. iv, 3. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."

2 After Divine Service brother Ebenezer Ferris was chosen Moderator, and brother Marmaduke Earle Clerk.

3 Voted, That such brethren as are present from sister churches, be requested to unite in conference.

4 Letters from the churches disposed to form into an association were read.

Churches.	Ministers and Messengers.	Num.
Warwick,	<i>Thomas Montanye,*</i> Henry Wesner, John Munro, Randal T. Madan.	199

* Those names in italics, are Ministers.

Churches.	Ministers and Messengers.	Brought Over.
Cortland's Manor	<i>Reuben Garison,</i> <i>Peter Kease,</i> <i>Amos Lain,</i> <i>Gamaliel Farbank.</i>	
North-Castle,	<i>Oliver Sherwood,</i> <i>David Peck,</i> <i>Ezra Fountain,</i> <i>Majer Hoight.</i>	
Wantage,	<i>Silas Southworth,</i> <i>Humphrey Martin,</i> <i>Evi Adams.</i>	
New-Cornwell,	<i>John Caton,</i> <i>Samuel Raymond,</i> <i>Gilbert Dean.</i>	
Newburgh,	<i>William Brundige,</i> <i>Gilbert Kniffin,</i> <i>Oliver Cofman.</i>	
Stamford,	<i>Ebenezer Ferris,</i> <i>Ebenezer Jones.</i>	
Ridgefield,	<i>Elias Lee,</i> <i>Robert Edmund,</i>	
Clinton Town,	<i>John Dodge,</i> <i>Richard Lawrence.</i>	
Cross-River,	— <i>Joshua Renolds.</i>	
2 Frederick's Town,	<i>Enoch Ferris,</i> <i>Robert Wixom,</i> <i>Asaph King,</i> <i>Benjamin Pelton.</i>	
Bedford,	<i>John Higgins,</i> <i>Silvanus Reynolds.</i>	

No	Churches.	Ministers and Messengers.	Num.
		Brought Over.	551
1	Fish-Kill,	} James Philips, Luther Seaven,	33
2	New-York,	} Benjamin Montanye, Thomas Garnis, John Gilmor.	41
			625

5 Among the churches convened, one, said to be the second church of New-York, was objected to.

Voted, That brothers, Lee, Philips, Cole, Caton and Pelton be a committee to determine whether said church be duly represented.

Adjourned to 7 o'Clock to-morrow morning.

June 1. Met pursuant to adjournment.

6 The committee appointed yesterday to determine whether the second church of New-York be duly represented, Report, That they, after due investigation of all apparent matters, relating thereunto, are of opinion that said church is duly represented.

7 The annexed Articles of Faith, and Plan of Association, were unanimously adopted by the churches present.

8 Appointed brother Marmaduke Earle to prepare a letter to be sent to the Philadelphia Association, proposing an union with that body.

9 Brother John Dodge delivered a discourse from Mat. i. 21. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

10 Voted, That this Association be styled the Warwick Baptist Association.

11 Appointed brother Ebenezer Ferris to preach the next Association Sermon, and in case of failure, brother John Dodge.

12 Appointed brother John Dodge to prepare the circular letter for the next Association.

13 The letter to the Philadelphia Association was produced and approved, and brother Thomas Montanye appointed a messenger to said Association.

14 Voted, That this Association meet alternately on the East and West sides of Hudson's river.

15 Appointed brother Thomas Garniss to superintend the printing of the minutes.

16 Voted, That our next Association be held at Warwick, on the third Tuesday in October, 1791.

The ARTICLES of FAITH, and PLAN of the ASSOCIATION.

1 **O**UR object is to glorify God. This we would endeavour to do by urging the importance of the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel in their moral and evangelical nature; commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; not pretending to have authority over any man, nor over the churches, whose representatives form this Association: But we act as an *Advisory Council* only, disclaiming all superiority, jurisdiction, coercive right and infallibility, and acknowledging the independance of every church, who has received authority from Christ to perform all the duties enjoined which respect the government of his church in this world.

2 The utility of such an Association appear in many respects; as the obtaining a more general acquaintance

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with the state of the churches; maintaining a friendly intercourse with each other; giving advice in cases of difficulty; supplying destitute churches with helps; and guarding ourselves against innovations which the churches of Christ may expect always to be troubled with by those who lye in wait to deceive.

3 The messengers chosen and sent to this Association by the churches, should be judicious, well versed in scripture, prudent and men of integrity. We judge men of such a description best qualified to represent churches who profess the scriptures to be the only rule of faith and practice in matters of religion. It is therefore expected that the churches will have respect to such qualifications, in order that they may be benefited by the consultations of their representatives.

4 With the Messengers, the churches are to send letters to the Association. These letters are to contain the names of the Messengers and their authority from the churches; the state of the churches respecting their continuance in the faith; their number baptized and added, received by letter, dismissed, restored, excommunicated, deceased, and their total number remaining. When any church wants counsel of the Association, the church is to state their case by query, in their letter, by which they may expect the judgment of the Association.

5 The Association is to meet annually at such place and on such time as may be determined by them at their preceding session, and to continue till business be finished. It is to be opened with Divine Service; after which a Moderator and Clerk are chosen; the letters from the churches are read; the names of the messengers are written, that they may be called over after meeting; then business is attended to and minutes thereof made.— A circular letter is prepared and signed, and a copy of it sent to every church, containing the minutes of the

Association; the state of the churches; when and by whom vacancies are to be supplied; who to preach the next Association Sermon and whatever else is needful for the churches to know.

6 All matters are to be determined in the Association by the suffrage of the messengers: all that speak are to address the Moderator, who is to take care that none be interrupted while speaking, and that no indecorum take place.

7 Churches are to be received into the Association by petition, setting forth their desire to be admitted; their faith and order and willingness to be conformable to the rules of this Associated body. When it is read and matters ripened for vote (they being found correspondent to the faith and practice of this body) the Moderator states the question; the suffrage being given in favor of the petition; the Moderator declares that such a church is received into this Association: in token of which he gives the messenger, presenting the petition, the right hand of fellowship, and bids him take his seat.

8 The churches belonging to this Association are to maintain stated times of church meeting in each church for the performance of church-business, as discipline and other matters.—In order that peace and unity be maintained, and the administration of the Lord Supper be attended, such churches as have no Administrator among them, are to apply to such as have for assistance. And the Association are to see that they be supplied from among us by an appointment at our general meeting: Except such vacant churches can be supplied by ministers of the same faith and order, who do not belong to this Association.

9 The faith and order of this Association are grounded and stand upon the authority of the Scripture of the Old and New Testament; the whole of them being a record of God, which record is true. And it is by ex-

experiencing the power of, and our understandings agree-
 to that testimony, that we have any expectation that
 persons and services will be approved by God. And
 whoever denies them, as many confessedly do in part
 ere they do not please them, is guilty of infidelity.
 10 The faith and practice of this Association are set
 th in a confession of faith published in England by up-
 rds of one hundred churches of the Baptist denomi-
 tion and adopted by the Philadelphia Association and
 ners of the Baptist order in America. This confession
 of faith we adopt not only to manifest our united agree-
 ment, but as a help to increase our understanding and
 establishment.

11 But as no composition of uninspired men is to be
 nsidered as perfect, it ought to be carefully examined
 the Scriptures, and received and improved only so
 r as it agrees with them. There are some things di-
 cted to in this confession of faith which are not held as
 riptural by the churches of this Association in general ;
 e therefore think proper to mention them.

1 The opinion of ruling Elders who are not authori-
 ed to preach the Gospel and administer ordinances, be-
 g officers in the church, is objected to ; as this must
 ke three distinct orders of officers in the church, and
 at, the exercise of church government lies in such
 ands, which cannot be proved.

2 Respecting the laying on of hands on baptized per-
 ns as such, we observe, That the texts of Scripture
 entioned as proof for said practice, are more likely to
 ave other meanings : as those in Acts viii. 17, and xix.

That these instances of laying on of hands were
 ts peculiar to an Apostle for the conveyance of the
 oly Ghost or some extraordinary gifts.—The other
 assage alluded to, is in Heb. vi. We find there is no
 ositive proof, whether the Apostle meant (as some think)

a Jewish rite which was to be left, or that act of an Apostle of conveying extraordinary gifts, or that of laying on of hands on persons setting them apart to some particular office. This text seems to us in general with more probability to allude to one of these cases than to the one pleaded for. We accordingly agree to leave this to the Elders and churches to discharge their own consciences and not to admit it into this Association in any query, as that which may concern its fellowship.

12 The sentiments respecting the apostacy of mankind; the consequences which follow it as such; how it came; the recovery, justification and salvation of souls as shall be saved, and how that is effected, are excellently expressed in our Confession of Faith; that of the Kirk of Scotland; that of the reformed Dutch church; that of the congregational church, and in the Saybrook platform in Connecticut, wherein there appears an agreement. This Association agree with them in the following articles:

The Apostacy. Our first parents sinned in eating the forbidden fruit—By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and became dead in sin, wholly defiled in all their faculties, they being the root and head of all mankind. The guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupt nature conveyed to all their posterity by ordinary generation; whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is good. Every man, both original and actual doth, in its own nature bring forth the wrath of God and the curse of the Law; death temporal and eternal.

The Recovery. God from all eternity did decree for the manifestation of his own glory, some men, all, to everlasting life; gave a people to be the seed of Christ, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified and finally glorified; their number so certain

an Ap definite that it cannot be increased or diminished; where-
 of lay fore they that are elected being fallen in Adam are re-
 some par deemed by Christ, are effectually called by his spirit
 with mo working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified
 to the d and kept by his power through faith unto salvation.
 his to Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually
 onscien called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved but the
 query, elect only. To all those for whom Christ hath obtained
 of m redemption by his blood, he doth certainly and effectua-
 n; how ally apply and communicate the same, effectually per-
 n of su suading them by his spirit to believe, governing their
 excell hearts, and overcoming all their enemies by his Almighty
 of the K power. God justifies not by infusing righteousness, not
 rch; t for any thing wrought in them; but by imputing the
 ook p obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them—Christ
 an ag by his obedience and death fully discharges the debt of
 e follo all those that are justified and did by the sacrifice of him-
 self, undergoing in their stead the penalty due unto
 in eat them, make proper, real and full satisfaction to God's
 their d justice in their behalf. Evangelical faith in its least de-
 d, and gree is different in the kind and nature of it from the
 faculti faith of common grace of temporary believers.

Here we have the great doctrines of the christian re-
 ligion easily and familiarly expressed; as the transgres-
 sion of our first parent Adam—The imputation of his sin
 to his posterity—the inability of man to recover himself—
 eternal election in Christ—particular redemption—effec-
 tual calling by sovereign and efficacious grace—the effi-
 cacy of the atonement of Christ, implying in it a dis-
 charge from the penalty annexed to the sins of the elect,
 by which the certainty of justification by the imputed
 righteousness of Christ comes upon all the seed of Christ.
 These doctrines, fully and jointly asserted by the fore-
 going Confessions of Faith, are held by this association.

The Baptist confession of faith is preferred to all other
 human compositions, being more uniform with the gos-

pel respecting the qualifications of persons for gospel privileges—the nature of the authority of the church—its independance—keeping the ordinances as they were first delivered. In order that the churches of Christ be guarded from all snares, and walk in the well-pleasing before God, it is essentially necessary to keep the ordinances as they were first delivered; that no person be received into a church, except by giving personal satisfaction of their being subjects of effectual calling by efficacious grace, and that by personal profession; and that the same person on such profession be baptized, by dipping or immersion into water, which is essential to the administration of that ordinance and church communion. Let all churches take particular care that persons admitted support in their life and conduct, a character agreeable to their profession.

Signed, in behalf of the Association,

EBENEZER FERRIS, *Moderator*

MARMADUKE EARLE, *Clerk.*

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